

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

May 1, 2015

Contact: Craig Ackerman  
352-629-0137, ext. 2052  
Craig.Ackerman@FLHealth.gov

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT PREPARES FOR HURRICANE SEASON WITH SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTER EXERCISE**

Ocala—The Florida Department of Health in Marion County will set up two mock special needs shelters May 7 to train staff on how to respond in the event that a hurricane or other disaster strikes Marion County.

All health department locations in Marion County will be closed May 7 for training, including WIC offices in Belleview and Reddick, as well as health department dental clinics. The department will return to normal operating hours Friday, May 8.

“We need to practice our response while the skies are clear if we want to be ready when the storm hits,” said Randy Ming, emergency planner for the Florida Department of Health in Marion County. “With each annual exercise, we get better at protecting community health.”

**WHAT: Special Needs Shelter Exercise**

**WHEN:** Thursday, May 7, 2015. Photo opportunity at 2 p.m.

**WHERE:** Florida Department of Health in Marion County, 1801 SE 32nd Avenue, Ocala

Department staff members who are not assigned as shelter workers will act as members of the public who are seeking help. Some of the actors will pretend to be ill or have physical limitations, testing the team’s ability to care for the diverse members of the community who count on the special needs shelters. The department’s last special needs shelter exercise was held May 2013.

###

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [Marion.FloridaHealth.gov](#).